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Go Paperless

Power Smart Pricing participants can now go paperless to conserve resources and reduce clutter.

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Online Upgrades

The Power Smart Pricing website is about to receive a makeover.

Your Participant Survey

Your input will help us improve the services and information that we provide!

We're Here to Help

If you have any questions about your participation in Power Smart Pricing, please feel free to contact CNT Energy at **1 (877) 655-6028** or **info@powersmartpricing.org**.

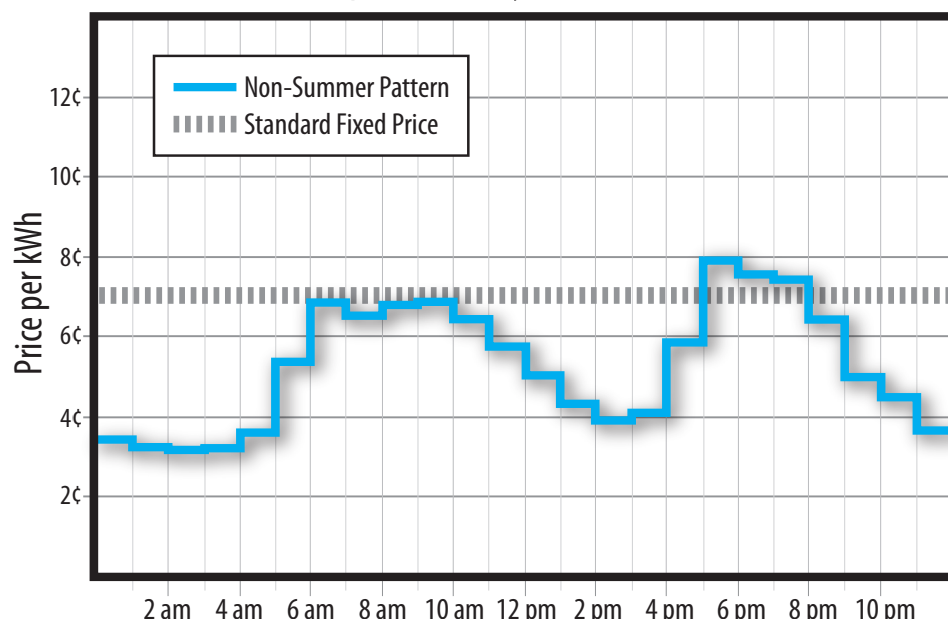
Price Patterns Change with the Season

Fall is in the air, and as the weather cools off, the hourly electricity price patterns change. During the fall and winter, prices tend to be lower and less variable than they are during the summer. Some days, the hourly day-ahead price of electricity is lower than the standard residential rate all day long, making it easy to save money with Power Smart Pricing. You can maximize your savings by keeping the fall and winter price pattern in mind, and making the most of times when the price of electricity is particularly low.

During the summer, hourly electricity prices are driven largely by demand for air conditioning, and the highest prices of the day tend to occur in the mid to late afternoon. The hourly price pattern changes in the fall, when prices tend to reach their highest point of the day during the early evening. The graph illustrates the typical price pattern for fall, winter and spring. Throughout the year, prices tend to be lower on weekends and holidays than on weekdays.

Although high prices aren't likely to occur often during the fall and winter, price spikes can still occur. For example, prices can rise when an extended cold snap increases electricity use for space heating, while also pushing up the cost of operating natural-gas fueled power plants. As always, you will receive a high price alert in advance any time prices will reach 13 cents per kWh or higher. And of course, you can check the day-ahead hourly prices any time online at www.powersmartpricing.org or by phone at **1-877-655-6028**.

Average Hourly Price Patterns





Additional money saving tips and information on energy efficiency programs may be found at www.actonenergy.net and at www.powersmartpricing.org.



Seasonal Saving Strategies

New home energy challenges arise in the fall as the weather gets cooler and the days get shorter. Here are a few tips that can help you save energy dollars this season.

Use Your Thermostat

Be sure to check your thermostat settings when it's time to switch over from air conditioning to heating. Set your thermostat to the lowest comfortable temperature, and lower the temperature five to 10 degrees before going to bed and when leaving home for more than four hours. You can use a programmable thermostat to automatically adjust the temperature to match your daily routine.

Take Care with Space Heaters

Portable electric space heaters are generally less efficient than whole-house heating systems. Use portable space heaters to warm small rooms and spaces. Wide use throughout your home will result in high utility bills. Also, space heaters can pose a fire hazard, so use caution and follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Change Furnace Filters

If you have a forced-air heating system, replace or clean your furnace filters once a month. This is an easy and affordable way to clean the air in your home while reducing your energy costs. When filters are clogged with dirt, the furnace must work harder to emit warm air. A new clean filter will have your furnace buzzing with efficiency.

Stop Sneaky Cold Air

A common pathway for cold air to get in from the outside is through electrical wall outlets. Electrical outlet sealers found in your hardware store provide a quick fix. Installation of these couldn't be easier. First, make sure power is turned off. Then unscrew your electrical outlet cover, pop out the holes in the perforated foam insulators, and place the insulator around the fixture. Finally, screw your outlet cover back on, and turn your electricity back on.

Light for Less

As the days get shorter in the fall, lighting accounts for a bigger portion of household electricity use. Cut your lighting cost by replacing incandescent bulbs with more efficient compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs). CFLs use 75 percent less energy than incandescent bulbs and last up to 10 times longer.

Celebrate with Savings

The holidays are just around the corner, and many households look forward to stringing up festive holiday lights. You can celebrate and save by investing in efficient strings of LED lights, which offer a safer and more energy efficient way to brighten up the season. LED holiday lights use around 75 percent less power than the old incandescent lights, and they stay cool to the touch, so they pose less of a fire hazard.



The Latest Electricity Price Trends and Rate Changes

Starting in June of this year, Power Smart Pricing started using day-ahead hourly prices rather than real-time hourly prices. With day-ahead prices, the hourly prices for each day are set the evening in advance, giving you time to plan your energy-saving actions. Another advantage of using day-ahead prices is that you are protected from unexpected price spikes. For example, on June 12 real-time prices spiked to 45 cents per kWh, while the day-ahead prices were only 11 cents per kWh during that hour. **Many participants say that the switch to day-ahead prices has given them added peace of mind and made participating in Power Smart Pricing easier and more convenient!**

Wrap-Up of Summer Electricity Prices

Summer is the time when hourly prices tend to be the highest, and this summer was no exception. The highest day-ahead price of the summer was 19 cents per kWh, but **the overall average for June through September was 5.2 cents per kWh**. Electricity bargains were still available during the night, when prices were frequently below two cents per kWh.

Higher summer energy prices also impacted the RTP Supplier Charge portion of Power Smart Pricing participants' bills. The RTP Supplier Charge varies from month to month and it was much higher this summer than last year. The good news is that it declined significantly in September and October, and will likely continue to be a very small portion of your bill until next summer. **Over the course of the year, the many months of low RTP Supplier Charges are expected to more than make up for the higher charges during the summer.** Throughout the year you can minimize your RTP Supplier Charge by using electricity wisely when demand and prices are high.

Energy Price Trends Suggest Smooth Sailing Ahead

When demand for electricity is highest, electricity generators must turn on additional power plants to meet this peak demand. Many of these "peaker" plants run on natural gas. As a result, the very high natural gas prices this summer contributed to higher peak prices. The good news is that natural gas prices have declined significantly, and our region depends less on natural gas fired power plants during the cooler seasons. Therefore, **we expect the lower prices we have seen in September and early October to continue for the time being. This means it's a great time to save with Power Smart Pricing!**

Rate Changes Coming Soon

The Ameren Illinois Utilities recently completed a rate case before the Illinois Commerce Commission. As a result of that case, a number of line items on your electric bill are expected to change. The changes will affect all residential customers in the same way, regardless of whether you are on Power Smart Pricing or the standard residential rate. For more information, go to www.ameren.com.

Go Paperless to Save Resources

Power Smart Pricing participants can now go paperless to help conserve resources, and to cut back on clutter around the house.

If you would prefer to receive the majority of your Power Smart Pricing communications electronically (by e-mail and online) rather than in the mail, simply contact CNT Energy at info@powersmartpricing.org and tell us you want to go paperless.

Please include your name, your Ameren account number, and the e-mail address you would like us to use to send you important program updates.





Complete Your Participant Survey

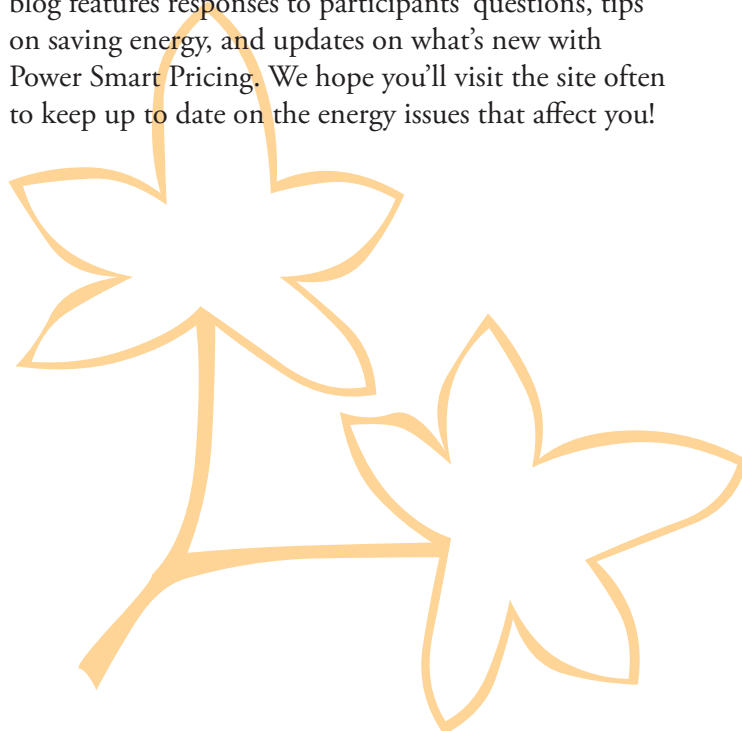
Each fall we survey Power Smart Pricing participants in order to learn about your experiences with the program. We hope you will take the time to complete and return the enclosed survey.

Your input will help us improve the services and information that we provide to Power Smart Pricing participants.

Online Upgrades Coming Soon

The Power Smart Pricing website is about to receive a makeover. We'll soon be launching a new look for www.powersmartpricing.org, along with some great new features. The new site will feature a simple visual display of hourly electricity prices, allowing you to view prices in a table or a color-coded bar chart.

And of course, the site will continue to be your one-stop shop for Power Smart Pricing news, updates, and energy-saving tips. And if you haven't checked it out yet, **take a look at our new Power Smart blog**. The blog features responses to participants' questions, tips on saving energy, and updates on what's new with Power Smart Pricing. We hope you'll visit the site often to keep up to date on the energy issues that affect you!



Participants Share Their Experiences

Power Smart Pricing participants are beginning to speak up. We asked participants to share some of their thoughts about what it has been like to be on the program, and we'd like to thank everyone who responded! Here are a few examples of what people like you are saying about Power Smart Pricing!

“We have been extremely impressed with not only the information on current electricity charges we receive from the Power Smart Pricing program, but also with the tips on how to conserve utility usage as well.”

- Dan E., Decatur

“In addition to the savings we have realized by using electricity when it is cheap, our overall electric usage is down every month simply because everyone in the family is now more conscious of wasting energy.”

- Mike O., Murphysboro

“Our family has not noticed the changes made in how we use electricity except that we wash dishes late at night and clothes early in the morning. The family does not seem to mind these changes as it gives an opportunity to help save money.”

- Randy S., Macomb

“These changes have made us think about energy more and how we use it. It means juggling when and how we do things, but we have been able to make it work. We are glad this program exists and hope that more people will take advantage of it in the future.”

- Tom and Cathy D., Fairview Heights, IL

If you would like to share your thoughts about the program please don't hesitate to get in touch! We are always happy to hear from participants.